

Bear ***Facts***

NO. 4

THE CINNAMON BEAR BRIGADE

DECEMBER 1990

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Portland, OR 97220

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Editor

Christmas is just around the corner, as announcer Bud Heistand would say. And that means it's time for THE CINNAMON BEAR, the four-inch-tall Paddy O'Cinnamon with the shoebutton eyes and the FEErocious gr-rah, gr-rooh.

As most of you will know, it was three years ago that the CINNAMON BEAR BRIGADE was formed as a "fan club" for the feisty little fellow. We've grown from just two -- your BEAR FACTS editor Don Jensen and his son, Erik, of Kenosha, WI -- to more than 350 "brigadiers." Along the way, the Brigade acquired, thank goodness, a devoted lady, Carolyn Breen Kolibaba, of Portland, OR, who brought order to chaos, and her invaluable right-hand-man Dennis Crow, who shares the workload.

The two primary strongholds of CINNAMON BEAR fans are the Pacific Northwest and the Chicago area, where the radio series has remained on the air, more or less continuously, since Christmas 1937. But people do move around the country, so we have members from Florida to Seattle, Massachusetts to Arizona and in between. We have doctors, homemakers, company presidents, teachers, realtors, ranchers, secretaries and, even, a crusty old newspaper reporter.

We've grown! But we've had growing pains too. Putting out a newsletter takes a lot of effort and costs money, mostly our own and some from a few kind angels who've helped out. We've found that you C.B. Brigadiers seem to fall into two categories. Some we've only heard from once in three years. Maybe you'd been out of touch with the broadcasts for years and, mostly, just wanted to know how to buy audio tapes so you could again enjoy the old shows, or introduce a new generation to their delights. Then we've not heard from you again. We hope we helped you and we've continued to send you BEAR FACTS each year.

Then there's a group of you who have stayed in contact, gotten involved, offered to help written brief bits for BEAR FACTS, commented on how much you enjoy the once-a-year newsletter. Bless you! You've made it worthwhile!

We don't really have a handle, though, on how many of you fall into each group. How many would like to continue to receive these annual newsletters? If enough of you do, AND SEND A

DOLLAR OR TWO TO SHOW IT, we'll publish again and will send you a new BEAR FACTS in November 1991. If, however, the response is limited, we'll get the message and not continue BEAR FACTS beyond the current issue. In that case, any funds remaining will be donated to an appropriate charity which helps needy children during the holiday season.

We're looking forward to hearing from you! We want to take this opportunity to wish you and yours a very MERRY CHRISTMAS and may your silver star twinkle brightly at the top of your tree!

-- DON JENSEN

A word from Carolyn

The past year has been a gr-r-reat one for us loyal fans of the Cinnamon Bear. We've had excellent publicity in Portland's THE OREGONIAN and in the WALL STREET JOURNAL. I've received letters and calls (some on Christmas Day!) from those who remember with warmth and happiness what the Cinnamon Bear meant to their childhood. I even found out that there is Cinnamon Bear sheet music!

I wish that all Brigade members could browse through my files and read all the delightful letters. Some, though, you WILL read in the next few pages.

In April, I was Invited to speak to Good Bears of the World, a charitable organization. The members seemed to enjoy the story of the Cinnamon Bear Brigade and 19 paid their \$1 and joined our group. Welcome, Good Bears of the World!

And a big welcome, too, to Dennis Crow, Superintendent of Schools in Sandy, OR, who is an avid fan of Paddy and old time radio. He has graciously offered to help with the publication of BEAR FACTS. "Much obliged to you," Dennis!

-- CAROLYN BREEN KOLIBABA

And heeere's the Cinnamon Bear

I never had the pleasure of meeting Buddy Duncan, but if I had I would ask him, "Whatever became of Jimmy Barton?" The radio actor who played "Jimmy" has so far proved elusive to all the old time radio clubs, and we'd love to find him. Maybe we should enlist "Mr. Keen, Tracer of Lost Persons."

Buddy Duncan, the original "Cinnamon Bear," who was a little person in real life and occasional recording artist for Capitol Records, probably never imagined the cult which would grow around this wonderful children's serial. Entire conventions centre on the saga of Paddy O'Cinnamon, the little bear "with the shoe button eyes," and a penchant for adventure, cinnamon buns and exotic, fabulous places.

When I was a kid in the '40s and '50s, I raced home from school to listen to Judy and Jimmy wriggle out of yet another impossible situation -- whether it be falling, headlong, into a vat of ink, turning into a croaking bullfrog while the Wintergreen Witch cackles hysterically, or

peering, awestruck, into the face of mighty Santa Claus hoping to enlist his considerable help in the recovery of the silver star.

As a fan of the show, and of old time radio in general, I experience not only the suspenseful fun of the cliff-hanger episodes, but also curiosity about how Glan Heisch wrote the show, how the great and versatile Felix Mills arranged the music (When Mills died a couple of years ago, there weren't any Cinnamon Bear songs in his disk collection), what a typical recording session was like at the did Radio Recorders' Studio where the program was transcribed in marathon readings, and what spin--offs into the commercial world originated because of the story's content (we know there was a colouring book, now worth \$50, and a foil star, and wonder what else?)

As a member of SPERDVAC, the Society to Preserve and Encourage Radio Drama, Variety and Comedy, I travel to Hollywood each year to attend the annual meeting. Elvia "Penelope, the Pelican" Allman frequently comes, but most of the cast members, a veritable Who's Who of early radio, are sadly gone. Gale "Weary Willie" Gordon and Dorothy "Fraidy Cat" Scott are very much alive. Mrs. Scott remembers nothing about the show except recording it. "I can't remember what happened 5 minutes ago, let along 50 years," she commented recently to SPERDVAC's President Larry Gassman.

Elliott "Presto, the 'Magician" Lewis, who retired to Oregon with his radio soap opera star wife, Mary Jane Croft, died just a few months ago. The actress who played "Queen Melissa" is unidentified, but SPERDVAC detectives are hot on her trail, sifting through audio clues from her other radio work on the program, "Magic Island." We keep looking for Barbara Jean Wong, who portrayed Judy Barton; Gassman heard from the late Frank Nelson that Ms. Wong is a schoolteacher. If you know her, let me know.

Nothing even remotely comparable to the Cinnamon Bear has been produced for children in recent years, certainly not on the radio, where dreams are formed. Somewhere, out there, maybe, is another writer like Glan Heisch, who will transport us to equally magical realms through the glory of imaginative sound. May he be discovered in all of our lifetimes, and may he receive the attention and recognition he deserves.

-- DENNIS W. CROW

Thanks so very much

The BEAR BRIGADE has received so much help and publicity during the past year. A heartfelt thanks go out to so many people. I hope I haven't inadvertently left anyone out. If I have, I apologize and issue a very special thanks to YOU!

Here are some of our special angels: DENNIS CROW, who has become an important and integral part of Carolyn's BEAR BRIGADE headquarters operations in Portland; PETER FARRELL, for his articles in the Portland OREGONIAN; SUSAN HAUSER, whose feature story in the WALL STREET JOURNAL got us nationwide recognition; LARRY and JOHN GASSMAN and DAVID HAEFELE, of SPERDVAC; KEN NEAL, editor of the Metro Washington Old Time Radio Club DC; ROBERT SIMPSON, editor of North American Radio

Archives; JAY HICKERSON, editor of Hello, Again; KATY BISHOP of Katy Bishop Productions, agent for the Heisch family in all Cinnamon Bear things; BILL WALL, IRENE and BOB MILLS, JOHN and JUDY FESSLER, MARIE RAYMOND, PAT MOORE of Good Bears of the World.

Cinnamon Bear is alive

My spouse of 26 years smiles with disbelief and shakes his head. I know what he's thinking. Phone calls to Portland, messages on strange peoples answering tapes, return phone calls from strangers! Very out of character for his usually predictable anaesthesiologist wife. Christmas and childhood memories he understands. But the urgency associated with discovering that the Cinnamon Bear is alive and well has no meaning to him.

My family lived in Chicago in the early 1940s. We lived on the Southside in a large development of apartment buildings which outlined many city blocks. The inner courtyards included grass, trees, benches and sidewalks. And it was in this milieu that I discovered the Cinnamon Bear. It was a friendly neighbourhood, 40 or so families, surrounded by our courtyard and there were a dozen or more children in our block alone. Radio programs -- Captain Midnight, the Lone Ranger -- were popular around dinner but never demanded my undivided loyalty as much as the Cinnamon Bear. It was adventure it marked the start of winter; the start of the holiday season. And the anticipation of hearing, "I'm the Cinnamon Bear with the shoebutton eyes..." made me eager for the days to get shorter and darkness to arrive earlier.

After several years of enjoying the program at home, I discovered that some of the younger kids in our block hadn't heard of the Cinnamon Bear. And it was then that I organized the Cinnamon Bear Club. I thought I wanted to teach school when I grew up, so I recruited pupils by bribe: An hour of "lessons" followed by the Cinnamon Bear program. It was a smashing success between Thanksgiving and Christmas! My mother pointed out that I could probably get at least 5 cents from each mother for caring for their children for an hour and a half before dinner. We met in my basement. Afterward I'd walk all the children home in the cold dark, successively met by smiling mothers, warm, bright aromatic kitchens. The club lasted a good three or four years.

I never knew anything about the people. who wrote the Cinnamon Bear story or who recorded the program. In fact I never even thought to ask I simply loved it!

25 December, 1989 -- DEIRDRE COLLINS BURNETT

Never say boo

One of the warmest memories I have of Christmas was growing up in Chicago listening to The Cinnamon Bear. My family lived near the Wieboldt department store on the northwest side of the city and the store piped in the story as we shopped and dreamed of Christmas. Although my children are grown and missed the wonderful fantasy, of Judy, Jimmy and Paddy, now I have two grandchildren and the Cinnamon Bear suits...them just fine. As for me, after all these years, I still remember to "never say boo to a Crazy. Quilt Dragon!"

-- TOM NEVINS

Bear does a 'number' on me



Recently, I was driving from Spokane to Seattle. It was evening. I was alone in my car traversing that long, flat deserty region about half way between the big city broadcasters. I scanned the radio band for a clear signal and I was startled to hear The Cinnamon Bear theme followed by an episode of the Grand Adventure.

I had not heard the program for over 50 years. Thus I felt that I was having a "Twilight Zone" experience. No one I know remembers ever hearing the show and with the passage of the decades I began to wonder how much validity my recollections held. The impact of this unexpected reunion was powerful enough to cause me to pull off the road into some dusty scrub. I lowered the window. Central Washington drooped in the heat but I had been transported a half century.

I was back in my bedroom late on a snowy Chicago afternoon. All my childish concerns and delights were as present as the Numdah rug on the floor and the maple furniture into which I had wood-burned -- a popular craft in the 30s -- representations of pinecones. My radio was on and I was assembling a cardboard cut-out circus, the latest premium from the Orphan Annie show. I had only to walk through the door to see my mother and father as they were then. Something else was present; the conjoined vibrancy of remembrance running on a two-track system with an adult capacity to simultaneously analyze the sensations evoked.

A neurosurgeon's probe is said to be able to produce a complete recreation of long-ago experiences. Coming upon Paddy O'Cinnamon in the manner I did is just as effective. Had I know that tapes existed, perhaps the time warp would have been less profoundly felt. Surprise had something to do with the degree and complexity of the feelings I experienced. Without that element, I would have been less bewildered, yet just as enchanted.

I have found, happily, that you can go home again! Paddy revealed to me in that wondrous epiphany the dimension of the un-accessed memory within us and the promise inherent in the mechanism that archives it.

-- GLORIA SCOTT COLE

Keeping it in my heart

The Cinnamon Bear was a happy time for my two brothers, my two sisters and myself, of course. For us it was hard times, the Depression years. My mother bless her heart, held down four jobs to support her five children and never would accept charity or welfare. She said that was for people worse off than we were. Mother taught. us make believe and pretend, to laugh and look on the bright side of things. Don't pray what you want, God knows what you need. Thank Him for being so gracious, loving and generous. Thank Him for the good times.

In the few hours in the evening she had away from her jobs, she would sew for us. We'd all gather around near the sewing machine next to the radio by the window in our living room. Without patterns she'd whip out the neatest clothes, especially around Christmas. As she sewed,

we would listen to the Cinnamon Bear. Oh my, how our imaginations would travel with Jimmy and Judy!

We could visualize the Root Beer ocean and the star. During those 15 minutes, no one dared whisper. We hung on every word. The Cinnamon Bear was and is still part of my life. Later, I tuned it in for my children and they laughed and cried, just like I did back in the Depression. Now I am a grandmother with three beautiful granddaughters and a handsome young grandson. I'm happy to know that the Cinnamon Bear will be part of their lives too. I want to keep the story in my heart and in the hearts of my children's children!

-- GERRY NEWBY



Cinnamon Bear in print.

By John Dunning

[This outline of the Christmas radio series appeared in John Dunning's book, TUNE IN YESTERDAY. (Prentice-Hall, 1976)].

THE CINNAMON BEAR was a Christmas story, syndicated to stations around the country in 26 chapters, usually beginning just before Thanksgiving and ending just before Christmas.

First heard in 1937, the show was repeated yearly in many markets because of its universal appeal to children. THE CINNAMON BEAR took them to a world of fantasy, where giants, pirates, dragons and witches lived. It began in the home of Judy and Jimmy Barton, two normal, healthy kids anxiously awaiting Christmas. When their mother sends them into the attic for the Silver Star, traditional ornament for the top of the tree, the adventure begins. There, they meet Paddy O'Cinnamon, a stuffed bear come to life. The Cinnamon Bear tells them that the star has been stolen by the Crazy Quilt Dragon, who has escaped with it to Maybeland. If the kids are ever to see the silver star again, they must follow the dragon.

THE CINNAMON BEAR teaches them to "de-grow," and they shrink to the height of four inches. Off they go through a crack in the wall, into the world of make-believe. The quest takes them through the land of ink-blotter soldiers, across the Root Beer Ocean, and into confrontations with such characters as the Wintergreen Witch, Fe Fo the Giant and Captain Taffy the Pirate.

The show was written by Glan Heisch and directed by Lindsay MacHarrie, with music by Felix Mills. Songs were by the Paul Taylor Quartet. With the help of Frank Nelson, Terry Black, an Illinois collector, came up with most of the names of the cast members.

Judy Barton: Barbara Jean Wong
Jimmy Barton: Unknown
Mother Barton: Verna Felton
Cinnamon Bear: Buddy Duncan
The Crazy Quilt Dragon: Joseph Kearns

Snappersnick: Hanley Stafford
Samuel the Seal and Slim Pickins, the Cockleburr Cowboy: Howard McNear
Penelope the Pelican: Elvia Allman
Santa Claus: Lou Merrill
Mr. Presto the Magician: Elliott Lewy
Captain Tin Top: Frank Nelson
Captain Taffy the pirate and Chief Cook-and-Bottlewasher: Cy Kendall
Weary Willy the stork and Oliver the ostrich: Gale Gordon
Professor Whiz the owl and King Blotto of the Inkaboos: Ted Osborne
Fe Fo the giant: Joe DuVal
Fraidy Cat: Dorothy Scott
Wintergreen Witch: Martha Wentworth
Assistant executioner: Ed Max Wesley the whale, the Halibut, Bumblebee and Grand Wonkey:
Lindsay MacHarrie
Narrator, Penguin, King Blotto's secretary, Lefty, Muddler Captain: Bud Heistand Queen
Melissa, Roly-Poly Policeman, Nicky Froodle, Jack Frost: Unknown
Snowman: Unknown (Naw... you don't suppose it really could have been)

Brigadiers' notes

I could not believe my eyes when I read the article in today's Wall Street Journal about the Cinnamon Bear. My tender years were spent in the '40s in Chicago so I'm well aware of the Cinnamon Bear's allure. Thanks, for bringing back great memories.

--DAVID B. GRUNEISEN

My first experience with the Cinnamon Bear was last Christmas. Paddy O'Cinnamon won my heart and I began quoting from the radio play all year round. Most of all I feel it wouldn't be a really and truly Christmas without all of the characters and the adventures they have on the quest for the Silver Star.

-- LYNNE McCABE

I've been listening since I was 4-years-old, when Cinnamon Bear began.

-- GLORIA M. HAUER

A Beary Popular Fellow

By Susan Hauser

Portland, Ore.

Thanks to the Cinnamon Bear Brigade, Cinnamon Bear fans in Portland and Chicago can rest content that there are other people just like them.

Those are the two places in the country where the Cinnamon Bear got his strongest pawhold after being introduced 52 years ago in a radio series. The show originally aired in many cities, but by popular demand, radio stations in Portland and Chicago replay the 26-episode

series every year between Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Even though people in both cities take the bear very seriously, it wasn't until two years ago that an official fan club, the Cinnamon Bear Brigade, was formed.

This inexplicable delay was in spite of the hoopla that surrounded the annual return of the holiday adventures of Judy and Jimmy Barton, the rascally Crazy Quilt Dragon, and our hero, the four-inch stuffed bear with the shoe-button eyes and the green ribbon round his neck, Paddy O'Cinnamon.

In Chicago, the radio show was for many years sponsored by Wieboldt's department store. There they passed out tin-foil silver stars to the kiddies, in honour of Judy and Jimmy's quest to restore the stolen star to their Christmas tree. Each Year in Portland, someone dresses up as the Cinnamon Bear to distribute cookies at Frederick & Nelson department store, originally Lipman's, during the holiday season.

But until Don Jensen, in Kenosha, Wis. (just north of Chicago), founded the Cinnamon Bear Brigade, behaving like a Cinnamon Bear fanatic was something most people did in the privacy of their homes.

"I thought I was alone for years," confessed Carolyn Breen Kolibaba of Portland, who serves as what Mr. Jensen terms his "Grand Wonkey." (That's a Cinnamon Bear joke, son.)

Now there are some 300 members, about evenly divided between the Portland and Chicago areas, with a sprinkling of fans in other parts of the country. Mr. Jensen, a reporter for the Kenosha News, puts out a newsletter that includes tidbits such as who played whom in the original broadcast.

For the record, the Cinnamon Bear was played by Buddy Duncan, an otherwise unknown actor who had the tenor voice appropriate for a four-inch-tall Irish bear; the Crazy Quilt Dragon was played by Joseph Kearns, who later played Mr. Wilson in the "Dennis the Menace" television show; a Chinese girl named Barbara Jean Wong played Judy Barton; but nobody seems to know who played Jimmy Barton.

Various up-and-coming radio actors took parts in the show, which was recorded in Los Angeles in a three-day rush, in time to be distributed to radio stations before the holidays. Frank Nelson, later the yeeeeeeesss-man on "The Jack Benny Show," played Captain Tintop; Gale Gordon of "The Lucy Show" played Weary Willy the Stork and the Ostrich; and Hanley Stafford, who was Daddy on "Baby Snooks" and Mr. Dithers on the "Blondie" radio show, played Snappersnick the Singing Crocodile.

Although he traffics in this amiable trivia, Mr. Jensen admits that Mrs. Kolibaba's Cinnamon Bear expertise far surpasses his own. Not only did she hear the very first broadcast of "The Cinnamon Bear" in 1937 (Mr. Jensen didn't tune in until 1944), but she carried on a friendly correspondence with the creator of the show, Glanville Heisch, from 1977 until Mr. Heisch's death 10 years later. Each year she hangs his letters on her Christmas tree, like precious ornaments.

"She is certainly the most devoted Cinnamon Bear fan that I know," said Mr. Jensen admiringly.

Mr. Jensen doesn't know the half of it. He has never seen Mrs. Kolibaba in her Cinnamon Bear fan club T-shirt, nor has he ever attended one of her tea parties, complete with bear cups, bear saucers and bear cookies.

I brought along my sister, Sarah, another ardent C.B.-er, when I was invited to tea at Mrs. Kolibaba's. She cleared a seat for us among the stuffed bears, then she and Sarah proceeded to have a Cinnamon Bear conversation. They said things like "Wow! Wow! Wow!" and "Yeah!

Yeah! Yeah!" (also Cinnamon Bear jokes). Then they tuned in to the early broadcast of "The Cinnamon Bear" (it is scheduled right after lunch for the benefit of Portland schoolchildren, so they can grow up to be just like Mrs. Kolibaba) and pretended to be scared once again of the menacing Inkaboos.

Jon Fessler of Portland is another fan whose life revolves around the bear, although he never intended to be quite so involved. Mr. Fessler unwittingly hopped in a pretty kettle of halibut (as the Cinnamon Bear would say) by buying the rights to the tapes of the broadcast. He thought that syndicating the radio show and selling sets of the tapes for \$32.95 would be a simple little side business.

However, since early November his workdays have lasted from 5 a.m. to 9 p.m. while he attempts to keep up with the demand for tapes. Thanks to a notice in the Cinnamon Bear Brigade's annual news-letter, the Bear Facts, Mr. Fessler has been swamped.

They don't just send in a check, either," said Mr. Fessler. "In at least half of them there's been a little note saying things like, 'Oh, thank you for bringing back such wonderful childhood memories.'"

Frankly, I can barely remember listening to "The Cinnamon Bear" on our enormous radio, although my mother assures me that I was right there at the side of my sister, who heard the same program and then grew up to be a Cinnamon Bear maniac.

By the end of our tea party, my sister and Mrs. Kolibaba were bosom buddies. They even held a special ceremony in which Sarah was inducted into the Cinnamon Bear Brigade. Then they bear-hugged and promised to carry on the quest for the silver star.

It seemed a bit silly to me, but then, I'm not a member of the Cinnamon Bear Brigade.

Ms. Hauser is a free-lance writer living in Portland.

Miscellany

The article above is a feature story by Oregon free-lance writer, SUSAN HAUSER, which appeared last December in the WALL STREET JOURNAL. Quite a few of you first heard about the Cinnamon Bear Brigade thanks to Susan's story.

GARY WOLF, author of the immensely popular WHO FRAMED ROGER RABBIT? is a great Cinnamon Bear fan and one of our Brigadiers.

"In the works," but probably not ready in time for this Christmas is a terrific stuffed "Official Cinnamon Bear." It is being produced by IRENE and BOB MILLS of THE TEDDY BEAR CONNECTION. It promises to be a bear that both C.B. fans and teddy bear lovers will cherish. More gr-r-r-eat news about this official bear appears later in this newsletter.

MAYBELAND WIRE SERVICE – Paddy O'Cinnamon a Subear Star? Maybe! Reliable sources hint at a motion picture in discussion stages. You read it here first:

Cinnamon Bear on TV ? Well, yes, that happened back in the early 1950s in Chicago, along with the Pacific Northwest, a hotbed of C.B. interest. In 1951, Windy City youngsters were able to watch their old friends, Judy, Jimmy, Paddy, Crazy Quilt and the rest on WGN-TV,

Channel 9, weekdays during the supper time slot. The TV series consisted of a filmed puppet show using the old radio transcription discs recorded years earlier. The television program continued for three more Christmas seasons on either WGN-TV or Chicago's ABC-TV Channel 7, then known as WENR-TV.

Radio? As far as we know, the original programs will be broadcast this season on WNIB/WNIZ, Chicago/Zion, IL, FM 97; KBPS, Portland, OR, AM 1450, and KUIK, Hillsboro, OR, AM 1360. Check with your station for times and days.

Portland area in love with 'Cinnamon Bear'



Paddy O'Cinnamon, a bear with a brogue created in a rush 52 years ago as a merchant association's holiday promotion, returns to Portland-area radio Friday, keeping alive what is for many families a favourite tradition.

Portland is one of the last cities where "The Cinnamon Bear" plays on, according to Don Jensen, the founder of the Cinnamon Bear Brigade. And as far as he knows, Portland is the only city where the old broadcasts are still aimed at children as well as nostalgic adults. Many Portlanders have fond memories of the radio story, sponsored by the Lipman, Wolfe & Co. department store. In it, Judy and Jimmy search their attic for the silver star for the top of the Christmas tree, but end up in a fantasy adventure. Some people make an effort each year to pass the story on to their TV-age children. So did Jensen, an editor of the Kenosha News in Wisconsin, who had warm childhood memories of listening to "Cinnamon Bear" on a Chicago station.

"Portland probably more than anywhere else is where the Cinnamon Bear is alive and conscious in the minds of people," Jensen said by telephone on the day he sent his once-a-year "Bear Facts" newsletter to the printer. "The other area in the country where there is substantial interest in the Cinnamon Bear is the Chicago area."

Although many Oregonians think the Bear is a native, he was born in Los Angeles, and transcriptions were syndicated to many cities. In Chicago, the Cinnamon Bear was sponsored by Wieboldt department store. A Chicago station that specializes in old-time radio plays the series each year. "I am not aware of other areas in the country where it is still broadcast," Jensen said.

KUIK (1360 AM) will air the serial the old-fashioned way, in 26 15-minute episodes, beginning at 5:45 p.m. Friday. Those programs will run Monday through Saturday through Dec. 23.

KBPS (1450 AM), the Portland public schools station, will start its weekday half-hour broadcasts on Wednesday, Nov. 29 at both 1 p.m. and 6:30 p.m., continuing through Dec. 15.

About 15 years ago Jensen introduced his 5-year-old son to the broadcast, and using an old reel tape "of surprisingly poor quality," made a new Bear fan. (He says at least three companies market much better tapes today.)

Then Jensen wrote about the Bear in his news-paper. "While I never got an awful lot of response to my story, I did get some." He got in touch with Glan Heisch, who wrote the series for an advertising friend while working at KFI, a Los Angeles radio station.

The serial was needed in a hurry, and Heisch and his wife, Elisabeth, came up with the Crazy Quilt Dragon and other characters "in less than a week," Heisch recounted 10 years ago. He had created "The Cinnamon Bear With the Shoe Button Eyes" earlier that year in a poem written for his oldest daughter. The full script, with 11 original songs, took six weeks to finish.

In 1987, Jensen realized the 50th anniversary of the series was approaching. When he tried to reach Heisch he learned the "Cinnamon Bear" author had died that year. To keep the anniversary from passing unnoticed, Jensen created a quickie newsletter, composed primarily of his own Bear articles and one that Helen Mershon, now of The Oregonian staff, had written for The Oregon Journal. The annual Bear Facts, which Jensen subsidises from his own pocket, now goes out to about 150 people.

In the newsletter's first year, Jensen said, "I got almost no response," although an article in an Illinois newspaper attracted some interest.

But Jensen said calling Kenosha from Portland to talk about the Cinnamon Bear Brigade is a roundabout route. The brigade's "chief cook and bottle washer" is Carolyn Breen Kolibaba of Portland. "She's more organized than I am," Jensen said. "As far as I'm concerned, she's the number one fan. I'm continuing what I do best, which is the editing aspect."

Kolibaba, who has what she believes is the only detailed account of the Cinnamon Bear story, based on shorthand notes taken from the broadcasts, says the best way to join the brigade and receive the Bear Facts is to send a stamped, self-addressed envelope with two loose 25-cent stamps to Don Jensen, 5204 70th St., Kenosha, Wis. 53142.

More about the Bear in a few days.

Reprinted from the Portland OREGONIAN

Portrait

By Don Jensen

[BEAR FACTS editor, Don Jensen is a newspaper reporter for the Kenosha, WI, NEWS. In 1982, he interviewed Cinnamon Bear creator, Glan Heisch for a holiday season feature article. Not long ago, he came across his original 8-year-old notes from that interview. Here are some excerpts from the notebook:]

Glanville Heisch was born in northern California. Wife, Elisabeth born in Madison, WI. The Cinnamon Bear radio series came about because of his first daughter, Catherine (Heisch) Borchmann (now Rockford, IL schoolteacher).

I was writer with LA station KFI. When Catherine was born, April 1937, I began writing light verse, series of poems for her. One was about Cinnamon Bear. When a boy in N. Calif., I had a stuffed little bear; my pet bear with shoebutton eyes. Called him Cinnamon Bear.

Producer for major transcription company, a friend, called. Said was looking for Christmas show, series of 15-min. cliff-hangers to run on stations during holiday period. I said, 'I don't write kids' stuff. He said, well if you do, let me know. Went home and thought about it, and

began to write. Once started, it sort of wrote itself. With wife's help, in about six weeks, at night, wrote the script and lyrics to the 12 songs in the show. I called the guy the next day, wrote an outline which he showed his boss. They liked it and I went to work.

Music written by Don Honrath, who died at 36 of polio, on brink of brilliant musical career. Scored and conducted by Felix Mills, one of radio's most active orchestra leaders of era. A small combo played it. Mills still living in his 80s. Sung by Paul Taylor Singers. Music, songs, bridge music all recorded separately and inserted in the show. No tape recordings in those days, all by electrical transcription.

Produced in less than a week at studio in Hollywood in May or June 1937. On the air, somewhere, probably every year since.

Glan Heisch — 1911-1986

By John "Bud" Heistand



[Glanville Heisch, of course, was the creator of the Cinnamon Bear. After Glan died. July 27, 1986, Bud Heistand, his brother-in-law and familiar radio voice (the show's narrator, as well as King Blotto's royal secretary, the Muddler Captain, and cowboy, Lefty) wrote the following for the Society to Preserve and Encourage Radio Drama and Variety, Hawthorne, CA. The following is excerpted from the April 1987 issue of RADIOGRAM, SPERDVAC's publication.]

Glan was one of the pioneers, both in local and network radio, who carried writer's credentials from college days to the time of the big coast-to-coast shows. At U.C. Berkeley he was editor of the humour magazine, PELICAN, wrote the Senior Extravaganza for his class and was a constant contributor to the monthly CALIFORNIAN.

After graduation, he came south and joined the staff of the "Drunkard," which is remembered as the granddaddy of all melodramas. It had the longest continuous run of any stage attraction in history! Glan didn't stay around that for long, though, as he had an appointment at Earle C. Anthony's radio station, KFI, where he found a spot as production manager. In those days, local radio was a lot more than records. There were live orchestral programs, remotes and radio drama. (Note: It was during this period when the Cinnamon Bear transcriptions were written and recorded.) When the Pepsodent Co. decided in 1937 to sponsor a network show featuring Walt Disney, a weekly half-hour of fantasy and special music, Glan was asked to join the troupe as writer-director.

The Mickey Mouse Theatre of the Air was Disney's first real broadcasting experience. I was the announcer and among the others who joined the 26 weeks of fun was a young Mel Blanc.

Heisch continued in the advertising side of radio production until WWII. He transferred for the duration to the U.S. Office of War Information. Stationed in San Francisco, he produced many a

shortwave program beamed to the Far East, especially messages to the Philippines from exiled political leaders. The enemy called it propaganda but we thought it was more in the nature of saying that "help is on the way!"

Glan returned to commercial broadcasting after the war, moving to New York, where he kept busy on several of the important projects of the post-war years. One show in particular, sponsored by International Harvester, featuring the "magic" voice of James Melton, became a great Sunday favourite. Jimmy was a great tenor and covered a wide range of vocal styles, from Mother Machree to light opera to sentimental ballads. He could always bring out the handkerchiefs with "Danny Boy" or "Stardust" in those days.

When TV replaced network radio, Glan made the leap back to the West Coast, where he specialized in writing and production of animated films, including those of U.P.A.

When he passed away he left behind the appealing Cinnamon Bear programs and a sizeable volume of verse, which his family is assembling for publication.

A word from Mrs. Heisch

Dear Mrs. Kolibaba:

I will always be grateful that in you my dear husband found such an earnest and energetic champion of his creation. Thank you so much and accept my most sincere good wishes....
Sincerely,
Elisabeth Heisch

Cinnamon Bear Breakfast Shows



For 23 years, I have written, produced, directed and choreographed the Cinnamon Bear Breakfast Shows for Frederick & Nelson department stores (formerly Lipman's) in Portland. The show utilizes a non-speaking bear (costume restrictions) in a costume that was developed in the 1950s for the store.

Although the costume is considered by many to be unattractive, the character is as popular as Santa in Portland and the shows sell out every year.

After experiencing such success with the show in Portland for many years, I moved to New York and my writing partner to Los Angeles.

Rather than get embroiled in the middle of an "ownership" question, I developed my own character that could be plugged into the scripts that I had developed for Cinnamon Bear. The end result: The Peppermint Bear. Here is a coincidence: The Peppermint Bear Show is produced at University of Wisconsin-Parkside in Kenosha. (Note: Kenosha, WI, is the hometown of BEAR

FACTS editor, Don Jensen) They also are presented in New York and a few other markets

So the scripts that are developed in Portland for the Cinnamon Bear shows follow the very next year in Kenosha as the Peppermint Bear Shows and then, the third year, in New York.

-- MICHAEL SNIDER

Words and music

Years ago, department stores handed out copies of the Cinnamon Bear songs so that children could sing along with the programs. Here are some of those lyrics in case you may want to join in the next time you play your tapes.

THE CINNAMON BEAR

I'm the Cinnamon Bear with the shoe button eyes. And I'm looking for someone to take by surprise. I go prowling and growling each night after dark. But the folks say my 'growl's just a cinnamon bark. Tho I growl, gr-rah! And I growl, gr-rooh! My victims only say, Oh who's afraid of you?

I'm the Cinnamon Bear with the shoe button eyes. And I'm huffy and fluffy and tough for my size. I devour lots of honey and cinnamon buns, just to make me ferocious but nobody runs. Now I'll growl gr-rah! and I'll growl, gr-rooh! And if you'll act afraid, I'm much obliged to you.

THE CANDY BUCCANEERS

We're known as Candy Buccaneers and pirating's our pleasure,
We never hunt for buried gold 'cause candy is our treasure.
The very thought of pirate loot is quite enough to bore us.
But when we sight a candy bar we shout and sing this chorus!

CHORUS;

Candy Ho! Candy Ho! There's candy to the starboard!
Sing Yo-Ho-Ho and a bottle of pop!
Candy Ho! Candy Ho! There's candy to the larboard:
Sing Yo-Ho-Ho and a bottle of pop!

Walking planks and fighting duels may be quite fine and dandy,
But if there's fighting to be done, we'd rather fight for candy.
We're very fond of jellybeans, of lollypops and taffy,
And when we capture chocolate fudge, we're positively daffy.

CHORUS:

Audio cassette tapes are available from:
PADDY O'CINNAMON HEADQUARTERS
P. O. BOX 93531
LOS ANGELES, CA 90093-0531

1--800. 93PADDY

Price is \$34.90 + \$2.50 shipping and handling; we offer the tapes to Cinnamon Bear Brigade members for \$29.90 + \$2.50 shipping and handling. You may send check or money order, PAYABLE TO S.B.P.INC., to the above Paddy O'Cinnamon address.

Featuring the original musical score, this collection of tapes has been computer enhanced to improve the sound quality. The tapes are packaged in a book-size jacket, the cover features an authorized illustration of Paddy! This is the ONLY COLLECTION OF TAPES AUTHORIZED BY GLAN AND ELISABETH HEISCH.

BULLETIN! - - - BULLETIN! - - - BULLETIN!

Members of the cinnamon Bear Brigade are the first to know that the Paddy O'Cinnamon Bear will be coming from Maybeland in 1991

Paddy will be available in a limited edition of 5000. Important for collectors and loyal fans, each bear will carry a numbered certificate assuring the authenticity of the edition. The lower the number, the greater is the collector value. To reserve your limited edition number please call 1-800-93PADDY and leave your name, address and phone number. You will be notified early in 1991 of Paddy's estimated time of arrival and exact cost.

1991 PROMISES TO BE A MOST EXCITING, MAGICAL, MYSTICAL YEAR FOR PADDY, CRAZY QUILT AND THEIR DEVOTED FANS

A journey through Maybeland

I know a bear, an Irish lad, O'Cinnamon by name,
With bright green ribbon ' round his neck from Maybeland he came.
He's more than "bearly" famous. He's on the radio.
He has a loyal fan club called the Bear Brigade, you know.
This Cinnamon Bear has been my pal for years which is the reason
To tell about a trip I take with him each Christmas season.
He always says, "Come, tag along;" I do, but just "by ear."
My bag is packed with memories -- '37 was THE year.

He hibernates at my house, warm and cozy, 'til December
When he awakes to yawn and stretch and say, "It's time, remember
"To climb aboard a plane of golden glass and journey far
To the realm of Maybeland to seek a silver star."

A dragon bold has nabbed the star, enchanted by its light.
He fell pell-mell beneath its spell and left in hasty flight.
This dragon, Crazy Quilt by name, the rascal in the case,
Leads Jimmy, Judy, Paddy O' upon a merry chase.

They soar above tall mountains with rainbow-tinted tops,
Bless my stuffing! What a sight! They're made of lollipops;
A valley sparkles far below. No shrubs, no trees, no grass.
No sheen of green is seen you see, it is a looking-glass:
Ah-hate; There's Crazy Quilt a-snooze above the Root Beer Ocean.
He hears their "boos" and takes a dive in cowardly motion.
They're captured by the Inkaboos, a bunch that's very scary,
Then sail the good ship, "Susie Q," with Candy Pirates merry.

Upon the Isle of Obie, they step through a picture frame
And meet a Gentle Giant. Fee Foe is the fellow's name.
But in a hut on Obie lurks a witch named Wintergreen.
This ugly hag has snatched the star and makes a frightful scene.
Gee Willikers! The star is sat upon! Now what to do?
Melissa, Queen of Maybeland, maybe will have a clue.
The shattered star within their care, down-hearted, off they roam,
To find Marshmallow Meadows, site of Queen Melissa's home.

Enthroned within her palace, Queen Melissa, wise and good
Smiles and says, "I'll help you. You must find the Wishing Wood,"
Therein a crooning crocodile, bad Muddlers, brown and wet,
Kind cowboys of the Purple Plain, an Indian chief are met.
Beyond, they glimpse a Golden Grove a-gleam against the sky.
Beneath a Singing Tree they slumber to a lullaby,
Then fly by top-hat-aeroplane up north to Santa's castle
Where cool Jack Frost repairs the star, but bad dolls cause a hassle.

To the rescue, Captain Tin Top, with tin soldiers bright and brave,
Who capture wicked Wintergreen and dolls. The star they save!
Alas, one last catastrophe! Sly Crazy Quilt turns thief
And shinnies up the North Pole with the silver star. Good grief!
Pale Misty Folk swirl 'round up there in fog. banks thick and Gray.
They grab you and they keep you if you dare to stray their way.
Our pals shout "boo" to try to stop the untrustworthy dragon
And, star in claw, he plummets down, crestfallen, tail a-saggin'.

With villains vanquished, star restored, our plucky, weary band
Awakes back in the attic, safely home from Maybeland.
In nick of timer It's Christmas Eve and time to trim the tree,
With Paddy and the silver star on top for all to see.

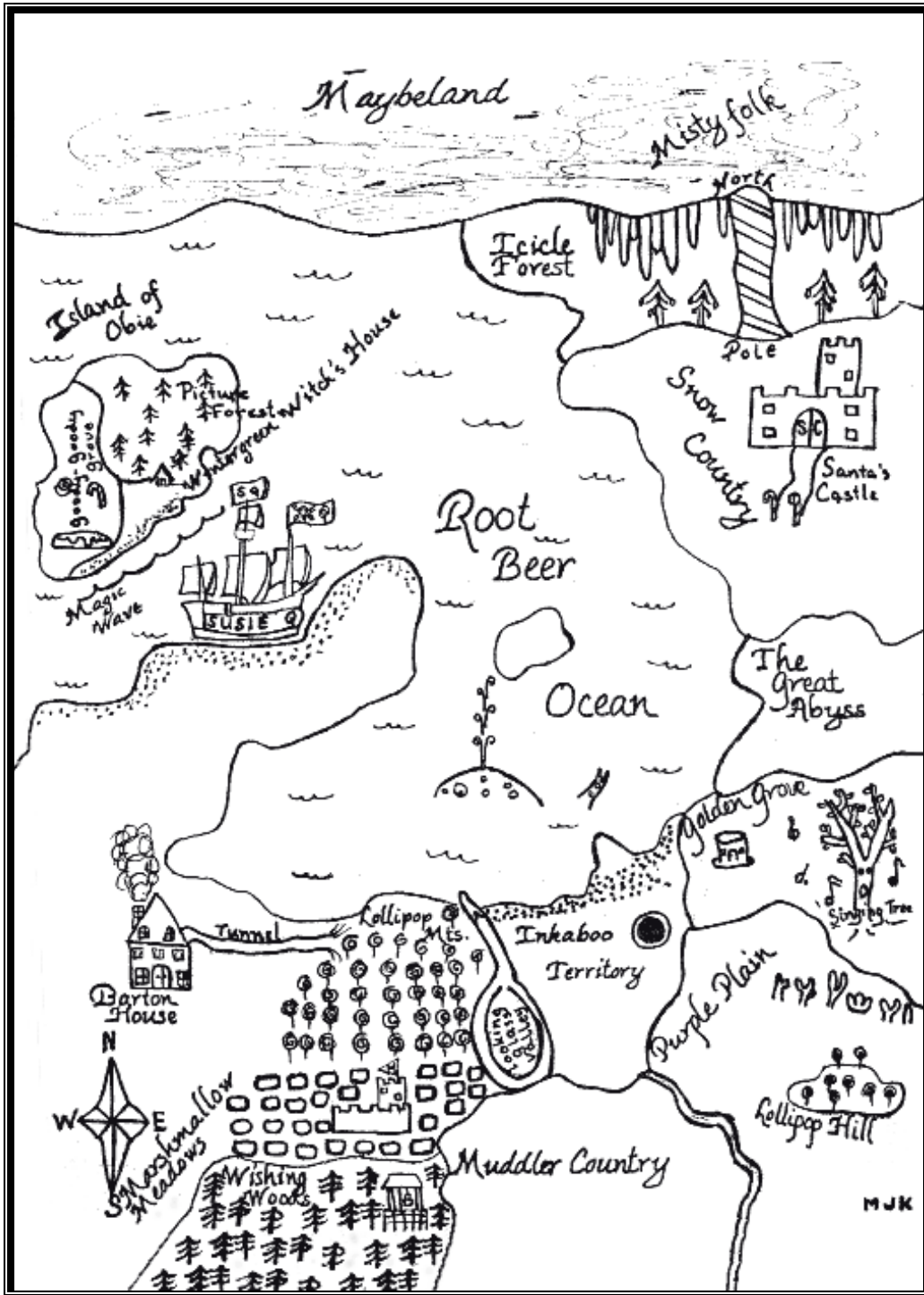
The grand adventure's over. They have come through thick and thin.

The silver star shines brightly and so does Paddy's grin.

Hush! Listen! Paddy's singing his own song to let us know

They weren't dreaming after all! "Merry Christmas! Cheerio!"

Carolyn Breen Kolibaba





*Judy Kooch
1990*

NOTE: from www.cinnamonber.co.uk

The complete series of 26 episodes [Plus the promotion recording, a preview of the series which is extremely rare and difficult to find] is available for you to download "FREE OF CHARGE" from our website.

Other "FREE GOODIES" a copy of the original colouring book given away by Wieboldt's Department Stores who sponsored the series in the 1940's. Why not Download it NOW!

All of the actual songs from the series with the full text for each one.

Coming soon to this site:

1. Many other "Bear" Stories for kids aged 1 to 199 to enjoy worldwide
2. A letters page, where I am happy to publish letters received from YOU
3. A "New Cinnamon Bear Brigade" Forum for your pleasure
4. All suggestions "Gratefully" received.

Many Thanks --- Tony ---

With Compliments from www.cinnamonbear.co.uk